



**George C. Steyskal (1909–1996)**

George Constance Steyskal, since 1975 Editor for Classical Languages for the *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*, died on May 30, 1996 in Gainesville, Florida. His wife preceded him in death in 1991. He is survived by a son, Neil Morgan Steyskal, and by two grandchildren, two great grandchildren and two brothers.

George was born in Detroit, Michigan on March 30, 1909. He was the oldest of seven children and early on entered factory work to help the family, graduating from the Henry Ford Trade School in Detroit. He worked for many years as a tool-and-die maker, and finally became superintendent of a plant, traveling around the country to estimate jobs. He joined the Systematic Entomology Laboratory, USDA, at the Smithsonian in 1962, retiring in 1979. After the death of his wife, he moved to Florida and became a resident Research Associate of the Florida State Collection of Arthropods.

During his working career he was interested in many aspects of natural history, and he became knowledgeable especially in insects, snails, and botany. His major interests early turned to the true flies (Diptera) and especially to the typically small flies of the Acalyptrate Diptera. His competence in botany would be useful as he later worked on insects attacking plants, the Tephritidae (fruit flies) and the Agromyzidae (leaf miners). His first paper was published in 1938 and he continued to publish until serious illness overtook him after a long and generally healthy life.

Although an amateur, his publications, often accompanied by his own drawings, attracted attention. When a vacancy occurred in the taxonomic organization now known as the Systematic Entomology Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, he applied and was hired, although at first as Agriculture Research Technician because of the lack of formal academic qualifications required for the position of Research Entomologist. Ultimately he was promoted to Research Agriculturist. At the time he was

hired, he had already published 101 papers, more than many people have in a career. At the time of his retirement in 1979, this total had swelled to 360. A complete bibliography has been prepared for the Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Washington to accompany a more detailed record of his work.

One remarkable facet of this multi-talented amateur was his interest in languages, both classical Latin and Greek and modern languages. Blessed with a phenomenal memory and a facility with languages, he translated all—I believe “all” is a fair statement—the European languages, and studied others such as Arabic and Japanese. This background, and the generous helpfulness that was an important part of his character, made him a natural advisor on scientific names for the *Proceeding of the Biological Society of Washington*, which he served faithfully for over twenty years, as well as for the *Proceedings of the Entomological Society of Washington*, and as Translation Editor (1980–1996) for Scripta Technica *Entomological Review* (the translation of the Russian serial, *Entomologicheskoe Obozrenie*).

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